

Letter from Gardiner Greene Hubbard to Alexander Graham Bell, November 19, 1874, with transcript

L 1874 Telegraph G.G.H. to A.G.B. Nov. 19 Washington, D.C.

I wrote you yesterday, and am today in receipt of the Commonwealth (Commonwealth written) (?) with account of Mr. Gray's invention. From this statement I should infer that he had accidentally stumbled upon the discovery which you had found by thought and reflection. The article shows great ignorance of the principle by which the invention is operated, and I doubt if he has even thought of the damper to the vibrating armature which is probably the most important thing in a practical view in the discovery. The article says the discovery was made about two months ago, this is an error, as the patents were taken out in Europe in August, and here before that time.

Whenever you recall any fact connected with your invention jot it down on paper, as time will be essential to us, and the more things actually performed by you at an earlier date, the better for our case.

You must not neglect an instant in your work, so that we may file the application for a patent as soon as possible. If you meet with any Electrical difficulties and Mr. Farmer is not at hand, then consult with Prof. Lovering.

I am more than ever satisfied with the propriety of our course in not filing the caveat. I am very much pleased with the papers you prepared, they are decidedly improved, but your claim is too broad to be sustained.